

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SEOUL 09736 090944Z

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ACTION SS-25

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 950

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 9736

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OGEN, PDIP, KS

SUBJECT: INAUGURATION

REF: STATE 290935

1. PRIME MINISTER CHOE KYU-HA AND FOREIGN MINISTER PARK TONG-JIN HAVE APPROACHED ME PRIVATELY AND SEPARATELY ON QUESTION OF SENDING HIGH LEVEL ROKG MISSION TO INAUGURATION. BOTH HAVE INDICATED THAT MISSION WOULD PROBABLY INCLUDE PRIMIN PERSONALLY. OBJECTIVE OF MISSION WOULD BE TO MAKE VERY EARLY CONTACT WITH PRESIDENT-ELECT CARTER'S ADMINISTRATION IN PART TO SOUND OUT ITS POLICIES TOWARD KOREA AND IN PART IN EFFORT TO REVERSE CURRENT DETERIORATION IN US-ROK RELATIONS.

2. IN ACCORDANCE WITH REFTTEL, I HAVE EXPLAINED OUR NORMAL PRACTICES FOR INAUGURATION AND SOUGHT TO DISCOURAGE SUCH A HIGH LEVEL MISSION. BOTH PRIMIN AND FONMIN HAVE, HOWEVER, PRESSED ME TO REAFFIRM THIS WITH WASHINGTON.

3. ADDITIONALLY, BOTH HAVE SUGGESTED THAT IF INAUGURATION MISSION NOT APPROPRIATE, ROKG WOULD WISH TO SEND EARLY HIGH LEVEL MISSION AFTER INAUGURATION. I HAVE OF COURSE MADE NO COMMITMENT ON THIS POINT AND HAVE IN FACT POINTED OUT THAT IN FIRST DAYS OF NEW ADMINISTRATION IT IS LIKELY TO BE FULLY OCCUPIED AND EARLY DISCUSSIONS WITH FOREIGN MISSIONS MOST DIFFICULT TO ARRANGE. NEVERTHELESS I ANTICIPATE CONTINUED QUERIES ON THIS POSSIBILITY. PRIMIN
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HINTED THAT CONCEPT OF SPECIAL MISSION TO NEW ADMINISTRATION

HAS PRESIDENT PARK'S AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE.

4. FOR RECORD, REQUEST REAFFIRMATION OF INAUGURATION POLICY
FOR TRANSMITTAL TO FOREIGN MINISTER AND THROUGH HIM TO
PRIME MINISTER. WOULD ALSO APPRECIATE, IF AVAILABLE, ANY
GUIDANCE ON QUESTION OF POST-INAUGURATION VISITS.
SNEIDER

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